

# Austria: Climate-friendly gardens are in vogue

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It is becoming more and more apparent that not only sustainability and biodiversity are in demand in our gardens, but also that the advancing climate change must be taken into account, especially when it comes to planting. There is still enough water in Austria, but we are already seeing problems in agriculture.



The following tips are general recommendations that will become particularly relevant in relation to the approaching climate change. You should try to see the connections in the natural cycle when working in the garden, because then you will be flexible enough to take on new challenges.

In order for your plants to grow healthily, species-appropriate light requirements and soil conditions are basic prerequisites to be prepared for climatic stress. This reads well, but especially in the beginning extreme situations you should pay attention to the fact that it can also become more "Mediterranean" in the choice of plants, but above all that you pay attention to what still looks healthy in the gardens and in the nature of your surroundings and get one or the other plant into the garden.

## Here are some more tips for your garden:

- Extremely dry summers cause stress in many plants, often resulting in stalled growth. Symptoms can be: Flower buds do not blossom, fruits are dropped before ripening, premature death of perennials. Plants can cope better with drought stress if they are watered sufficiently at longer intervals. The formation of deep roots is promoted by less frequent watering. In practice, extensive watering at longer intervals is better than distributing a little water in the garden every day.
- During wind and heavy rain, soil that is not overgrown erodes and silts up. To protect it, either vegetation or another protective layer must be applied. The best protection is provided by a plant cover (ground-covering plants, green manure). Where vegetation is temporarily not possible (e.g. vegetable garden, summer flower bed), the soil can be covered with mulch (e.g. leaves, grass cuttings, wood chippings, bark material).
- Planting deciduous trees in our gardens is a big trend. Trees provide shade and evaporative cooling in summer, and in winter they let light into the house. They bind CO<sup>2</sup>, slow down the wind, produce oxygen and act as an effective fine dust filter. Deciduous trees are irreplaceable for a pleasant living space in the future.
- How we deal with our water will also be more important in the future. For this reason, there has been a recommendation for some time to collect rainwater from roofs and use it for watering the garden. The water can also be used for a wetland biotope or you can simply let

it seep into the garden where you want it. Sealing of surfaces, such as paths, eaves or terraces, should be largely avoided. In principle, watering should be geared to the needs of the plants. Plants have different needs for irrigation water, so it is better to supply the garden areas individually than to wet everything evenly.



- And finally, it is also about "weed control", which should be carried out extremely selectively. Nowadays, wild plants can be tolerated and included in the design of the garden, a new garden wave is emerging. An area overgrown with wild herbs is in any case preferable to one without - it is not only valuable for the soil, but also for the insect world.

You may have noticed it, there is a trend back to the natural garden, to a garden with shrubs, with beds full of flowers and vegetables, where at least one tree provides shade and not just a measly awning, a garden full of plants that not only survive a longer time without intensive care, but also look good.



